

News From _____

U.S. Senator
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Byrd Announces Funding to Preserve and Enhance West Virginia's Environmental and Cultural Heritage

More than \$7 Million for the Preservation of Local Landmarks

WASHINGTON, D.C.... U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., has announced \$7.361 million in funding for maintaining and enhancing West Virginia's environmental and cultural heritage, as part of the recently enacted FY 09 Omnibus Appropriations.

"West Virginia is deep in natural and cultural beauty and history, and it is important that we work to preserve, renovate and restore these icons so that the public can better understand and continue to access and explore these great and beautiful treasures of the Mountain State," said Byrd. "These efforts will also stimulate job creation, as well as attract more tourists to the area."

Byrd's successful efforts this year include funding for the following projects:

- \$2.6 million was acquired for construction activities at the New River Gorge National River. This money will allow the National Park Service to develop a new, Class A campground, and build up to 15 miles of "stacked loop" mountain bike trails – both of which will contribute to increased tourism. The federal funds will also allow development to begin on the Woods Ferry and Mason's Branch sites, and for the restoration of the Richard Hamilton Farm in the southern part of the Park. Another \$500,000 will be used to acquire land to expand the boundaries within the park from willing sellers;
- Byrd secured \$2 million for the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. This funding will allow the National Park Service to preserve the historic landscape

of Bolivar Heights and School House Ridge. Additionally, it will enable enhanced trail connections, river access, and interpretation at these sites. Byrd also added \$1.425 million for improvement to Potomac Street in downtown Harpers Ferry;

- Byrd acquired \$1.271 million for capital improvements at the Monongahela National Forest, which will allow the Forest Service to build new visitor facilities and improve site accessibility at Spruce Knob Lake. The Forest Service will also improve visitor facilities and campsites at Cranberry Campground in Webster County, and fund water system improvements at Horseshoe Campground in Tucker County;
- Additionally, Byrd obtained \$825,000 for road improvements and \$350,000 for trail improvements at the Monongahela National Forest. The funding for road improvements will support the design of a new bridge that would improve access to the Dolly Sods Scenic Wilderness Area and the community of Laneville, and would allow the Forest Service to install culverts on Gladys-Durbin Road in Pocahontas and Randolph Counties. The money for trail improvements will contribute to improvements for the highly trafficked West Side Trail at the Seneca Rocks Discovery Center;
- \$190,000 is included in the bill for the completion of a lodge in Clay County by the Central Appalachian Empowerment Zone (CAEZ) at the J.G. Bradley Campground near the Elk River and Buffalo Creek. The lodge has seen an increased number of visitors as a result of the excellent fishing and recreational opportunities the area offers. The funding will also complement unified efforts to create and build up a tourism industry in the County; and
- \$125,000 was obtained for the Jefferson County African-American Community Association to complete interior renovations of Fisherman's Hall in Charles Town.

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